EARLY BYZANTINE PILGRIMAGE ART

Gary Vikan

REVISED EDITION



BYZANTINE



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by

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Cover illustrations: Tin-lead ampulla with the Veneration of the Cross [front cover]
and the Women at the Tomb [back cover] (shown 3: 1)
Jerusalem; ca. 600



Fig. 1

There were few phenomena in the history of Byzantium which mobilized more people, wealth, and artistic creativity than did pilgrimage. Within a few generations of the foundation of the Empire by Constantine the Great, the east Mediterranean had come alive with pious travelers. Among the first was Constantine's own mother, Helena, who, according to Eusebius, journeyed to the Holy Land at her son's request to dedicate his newly-built churches located at the sacred sites identified with the Birth, Death, and Ascension of Christ-Bethlehem, Golgotha, and the Mount of Olives (*Life of Const.*, 3.4lff.). Thousands were to follow in a mass mobilization of body and spirit which grew uninterrupted until the Arab conquest of the Holy Land in the seventh century. The story of the Early Byzantine pilgrim survives in travelogues and guide books, in historical texts and theological tracts, in scores of popular legends generated by miracle-working saints, and, most palpably, in hundreds of surviving pilgrim "souvenirs" and huge, abandoned shrines at the holy sites. All bear witness to a broadly-based, popular movement which, surprisingly, had neither precedent in the Bible nor mandate among the Church Fathers.

Who were these pilgrims? Literally, they were *hoi polloi*; they came from every stratum of society, from all vocations (including the indigent and sick), and from every corner of the Christian world. Theodoret († ca. 453) gives an eyewitness account of the polyglot group

drawn to Symeon Stylites the Elder (†459), the famous Syrian ascetic who spent nearly four decades atop one or another column in the barren wilderness northeast of Antioch (Hist. rel., 26.11; see fig. 2):

> *Not only the inhabitants of our own land come flocking there, but also Ishmaelites, Persians, and the Armenians, their sub-jects, [as well as] Georgians, Homerites and tribes which live still further inland. There also come many from the far West, including Spain, Britain, and Gaul. And of Italy, we need not even speak....*

Naturally, their immediate motives varied. The sick needed healing; the penitent, forgiveness; the confused, guidance-and many seem to have come simply as a way of affirming

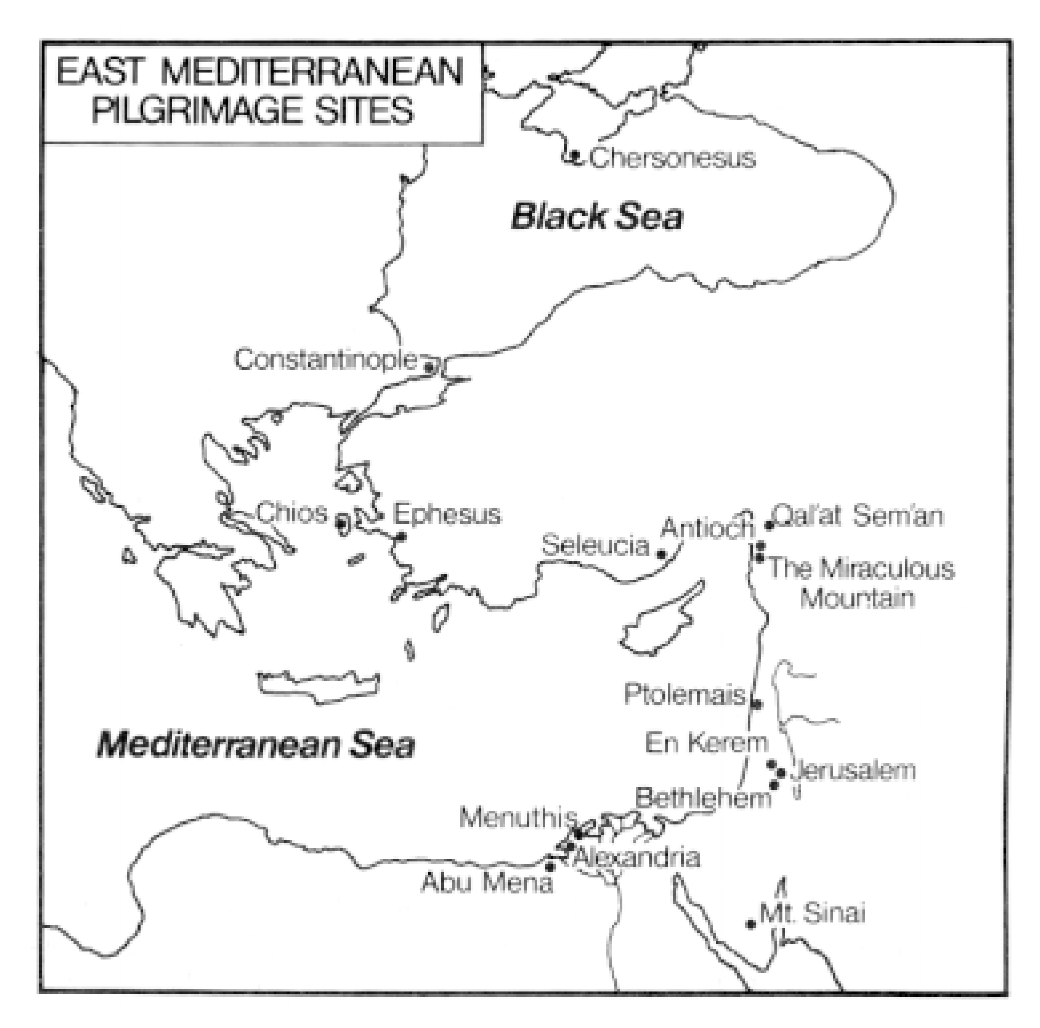


Fig. 2

and perfecting their Christian faith. Basilius, Bishop of Seleucia and a contemporary of Theodoret, describes the pilgrim shrine of St. Thekla, at Seleucia (*Vit*., I; see fig. 2):

> *One never found her church without pilgrims, who streamed there from all sides; one group on account of the grandeur of the place in order to pray and to bring their offerings, and the other in order to receive healing and help against sickness, pain, and demons.*

Ultimately, however, each of these pious travelers was driven by the same basic convic-tion; namely, that the sanctity of holy people, holy objects, and holy places was in some measure transferable through physical contact. John of Damascus was explicit (*Orth. Faith*, 4.11):

> *So, then, that honorable and most truly venerable tree upon which Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for us is itself to be adored, because it has been sanctified by contact with the sacred body and blood.*

Thus, unlike the modern tourist who goes to see, the Early Byzantine pilgrim went to *touch*, to venerate. This practice is no more clearly evoked than in the diary of Egeria, the Spanish noblewoman who made a grand tour of the Holy Land around A.D. 380. The time is Thurs-day of Great Week; the place, Constantine's church at Golgotha (*Travels*, 37.1):

> *A table is placed before him* [the bishop] *with a cloth on it, the deacons stand around, and there is brought to him a gold and silver box containing the Holy Wood of the Cross. It is opened, and the Wood of the Cross and the Title are taken out and placed on the table.*
>
> *As long as the Holy Wood is on the table, the bishop sits with his hands resting on either end of it and holds it down, and the deacons around him keep watch over it. They guard it like this because what happens now is that all the people, cate-chumens as well as faithful, come up one by one to the table. They stoop down over it, kiss the Wood, and move on. But on one occasion (I don't know when) one of them bit off a piece of the Holy Wood and stole it away, and for this reason the deacons stand round and keep watch in case anyone dares to do the same thing.*

Holy men, like Symeon Stylites, and miracle-working relics, like his column, were secondary in the development of Early Byzantine pilgrimage (both in time and importance) to those great holy sites associated with the Bible, most of which, of course, were in Palestine. Old Testament sites greatly outnumbered those associated with the New, and included such stunning and remote locations as Mt. Sinai. Not surprisingly, however, places linked to the life, miracles, and passion of Christ enjoyed the greatest popularity, and at the head of the list was Jerusalem, which could claim half a dozen of the most significant shrines in Christendom. Between the Peace of the Church and the Arab Conquest, Jerusalem was in effect one vast pilgrim complex with an established "circuit" of sites, myriad churches, shrines, and relics, vast hospices, and thousands of visitors—all of which were dramatically orchestrated into great city-wide processions on the most important days in the church calendar.

* * *

Major biblical sites and famous miracle-working saints were, therefore, the great attractions which set the Early Christian world in motion. Each by itself would merit a pilgrim's journey. Yet once on holy soil the pious traveler was confronted with a whole spectrum of lesser attractions which, if not in themselves worthy of the trip, were at least worth a detour. Around A.D. 570 an anonymous pilgrim from Piacenza, in northern Italy, entered the Holy Land by way of Ptolemais (modern Acco), keeping a detailed diary as he made his way southward toward Jerusalem (*Travels,* l ff.). He stopped first at Diocaesarea (modern Zippori) to see the chair in which the Virgin sat during the Annunciation, and then went on to Cana to touch the two surviving water jugs whose contents Christ had miraculously turned to wine. From there he was off seven or so kilometers to Nazareth where, among other things, he saw preserved in the local synagogue the book in which Christ, as a child, had written his ABC's, and then he was off again another ten kiIometers to climb Mt. Tabor, the site of the Transfiguration (fig. 3; after Wilkinson).

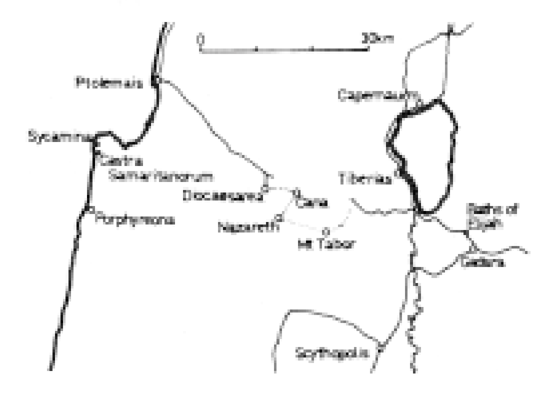


Fig. 3 (Route of the Piacenza Pilgrim)

This reveals the texture of a typical pilgrim's itinerary, save, perhaps, for its lack of references to those more mundane, local "curiosities" which would delight or shock any foreigner, such as the one-pound dates which our pilgrim picked and carted home from Jericho, or the Ethiopians he encountered in the Negev Desert who (Travels, 35): "*had their nostrils split, their ears cut, boots on their feet, and rings on their toes.*" His journey was slow, not only because of its many stops but also due to the very nature of travel: even on a well-maintained Roman road the sixth-century pilgrim would have been fortunate to average (by foot or donkey) more than twenty miles per day. Egeria, who began her pilgrimage "right from the other end of the earth, " seems to have spent more than four years away from home, at least one of which was fully consumed in travel (Wilkinson, 1977, 19).

Because of the proliferation of hospices, pilgrimage was not inordinately expensive, and in fact was open to the sick and indigent, who were by charter the responsibility of monastic foundations. Shortly after his climb up Mt. Tabor the pilgrim from Piacenza crossed the Jordan to the city of Gadara and then to the site of some pre-Christian hot springs called the Baths of Elijah, where his diary notes that "*lepers are cleansed ... and have their meals from the inn ... at public expense*" (*Travels*, 7). Later, in Jerusalem, he described his visit to the basilica of St. Mary (*Travels*, 23):

> *... with its great congregation of monks, and its guest houses for men and women. In catering for travelers they have a vast number of tables, and more than 3,000 beds for the sick.*

Not only was pilgrimage slow, it was dangerous, and the pilgrim took care to travel in a group. There were bandits to contend with as well as wild animals which, in those days, included the lion. Moreover, there were hostile local populations which, for the Piacenza pilgrim, included marauding Saracens in the Sinai and, further north, unfriendly Judeans and Samaritans. Indeed, shortly after leaving the Baths of Elijah he records this tense encounter (*Travels*, 8):

> *There were several Samaritan cities and villages on our way down through the plains, and wherever we passed along the streets they burned away our footprints with straw, whether we were Christians or Jews, they have such a horror of both. This is what they tell Christians, "Don't touch what you want to buy till you have paid the money. If you do touch anything without buying it there will soon be trouble." ... When you arrive they curse you. Nor must you spit. If you do, you start trouble, and later they have to purify themselves with water before entering their village or city.*

A local guide was probably necessary, not only to point out sites of lesser significance (like the sycamore in Ramses, "*said to have been planted by the Patriarchs*" [Egeria, Travels, 8.3]), but also at times to ensure safe passage through hostile territory. The usefulness of such a guide is suggested by the inordinately large sum of 3 1 /2 gold solidi (one-half of the price of a camel!) paid by a Negev trading company for the services of a Saracen guide on a journey to the top of Mt. Sinai (Kraemer, 1958, no. 89). Beyond this often necessary service, and depending on both his wealth and foresight, a pilgrim might pack in his luggage any number of travel aids, including a Bible for appropriate readings at each site, an *Onomasticon* to give the modem, local names for biblical places, letters of introduction and transit, and perhaps even maps and guidebooks. The *Breviarius* ["short account"] *of Jerusalem*, from the early sixth century, falls into the category of guidebooks; it is written in a crisp and efficient style, and reveals its function as a pilgrim's guide even in its opening words (*Breviarius*, 1):

> *This city [Jerusalem] is set on a mountain. In the center of the city is the Basilica of Constantine. As one goes into, the basilica itself there is a chamber on the left .....*

* * *

Art most obviously influenced the pilgrim's life in the form of great churches and magnificent shrines which, over the centuries, came to dominate the skyline of his route. When Symeon the Elder died in the summer of A.D. 459, his body was ceremoniously escorted to Antioch by seven bishops and by the *magister militum* of the East, together with a contingent of six hundred soldiers; following was a throng of unruly pilgrims (Antonius, *Vit*., 29). At that time no architectural monument yet existed atop the rocky bluff where Symeon had spent the last four decades of his life. By the end of the century, however, there stood on that site a vast cruciform martyrium consisting of four basilicas radiating from the sides of a central octagon within which was enshrined the famous column (fig. 4). Their 5,000 square meters of floor space was nearly equal to that of the Great Church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Yet, quite unlike Hagia Sophia, the church of St. Symeon was (and is) perched alone atop a barren hill sixty kilometers from the nearest city. Although it was not, in fact, completely alone, for the church was itself part of a huge, walled complex. which once included a monastery, two lesser churches, and several large hostels (fig. 5; after Tchalenko). From whom came the enormous wealth for such a project; where did the architects sculptors, and masons come from? No one knows for sure. One thing, however, is certain; such a compound in such a remote place presupposes a vast pilgrim trade of the sort that Theodoret describes. And what makes this site, Qal'at Sem'an, so impressive is that the entire project was completed in just a few decades, and only *after* Symeon had died and his bones had been carried away to Antioch.



Fig. 4

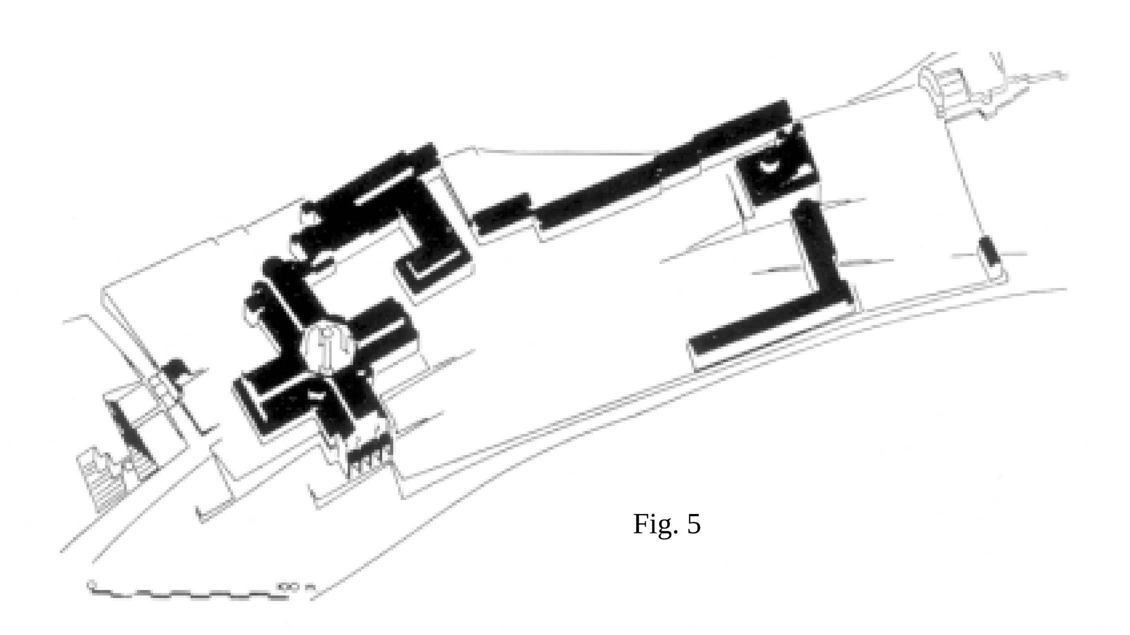


Fig. 5

Less imposing though more sumptuous was the art and ornament applied to those holy objects (tombs, columns, grottoes, etc.) which gave monastery, church, and hostel their *raison d'etre.* Consider the most famous and enduring relic of all: the tomb of Christ. Through the initiative of Constantine (and the prodding of Eusebius) it was "discovered" in earthen fill beneath a Roman temple in the northwestern part of the city (Eusebius,

Life of Const., 3.28; 3.34). Since the tomb was literally a cave in living rock, Constantine's workers first cut it free from its surroundings, then suitably embellished it "*with rare columns and ... most splendid decorations of every kind*"; by mid-century it seems to have been enclosed in a tall circular building, the Anastasis ["Resurrection"] Rotunda (see fig. 15). It was at this small stone aedicula that the pious visitor to Jerusalem made his first stop, and its sumptuous ornamentation must have left a lasting impression. The Piacenza pilgrim recorded his encounter in this manner (*Travels*, 18):

> *After we had prostrated ourselves and kissed the ground we entered the Holy City and venerated the Lord's Tomb. The Tomb is hewn out of living rock, or rather in the rock itself ... and in the place where the Lord's body was laid, at the head, has been placed a bronze lamp ... The Stone which closed the Tomb is in front of the Tomb door, and is made of the same colored rock as the rock hewn from Golgotha. This stone is decorated with gold and precious stones, but the rock of the Tomb is like a millstone. There are ornaments in vast numbers, which hang from the iron rods: armlets, bracelets, necklaces, rings, tiaras, plaited girdles, belts, emperors' crowns of gold and precious stones and the insignia of an empress. The tomb is roofed with a cone which is silver, with added beams of gold.*

* * *

Churches and shrines where Byzantine pilgrimage art on its grand, luxurious, and imposing scale; they constitute the "sacred real estate" of pilgrimage. But art was also important on a much more modest scale, since the pilgrim, like the modern tourist, wanted something to take home with him. And while, as Egeria points out, many may have wished for a sliver of the True Cross, few could actually expect to receive such a prize; indeed the vast majority of our pilgrims was obliged to accept instead a eulogia or "blessing" (Stuiber, 1966, cols. 900ff.). When material, this "blessing" usually consisted of a small quantity of some common substance like oil, water, or earth which had been sanctified by contact with someone or something holy; occasionally, these eulogiai bear images evoking the circumstances of their origin or the context of their use.

For the Jews of the Old Testament, the concept of "blessing" evoked by the word eulogia was thoroughly spiritual and quite abstract, as in "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel ..." (*Ps*. 72.18). Among early Christians, however, this word gradually came to be applied to blessed objects, such as eulogia bread, and eventually even to unblessed objects exchanged as gifts among the brotherhood of the faithful. For example, in the fifth century, Akakios of Melitene sent a letter to Firmus of Caesarea, and along with it, as a eulogia, a large fish (Firm., *Ep*., 35.19).

For the pilgrim, the word eulogia held a special meaning, somewhere between the meaning common in the Old Testament and the gift of the fish. For him, it was the "blessing" conveyed—or more precisely, received—by contact with a holy place, a holy object, or a holy person. Its value, of course, was dependent on his belief in the physical communicability of sanctity. It could either be received directly and immaterially, as by kissing the True Cross, or it could be conveyed indirectly through a substance of neutral origin which itself had been blessed by such contact. The Piacenza pilgrim got most of his "blessings" in the former way. He tells us, for example, that he took a bath in the spring at Cana "to gain a blessing." Similarly, he took a dip in the Jordan River "to gain a blessing," and reclined on the couch in the Garden of Gethsemene "to gain a blessing." Sometime later he arrived at the Church of Holy Sion in Jerusalem, where he records the following bizarre incident (*Travels*, 22):

> *I saw a human head enclosed in a reliquary of gold and adorned with gems, which they say is that of St. Theodota the Martyr. Many drink out of it to gain a blessing, and so did I.*

In each of these instances the Piacenza pilgrim gained his "blessing" directly, through action. In other cases, however, he describes a blessed object or substance that might be carried away. Two, oil and earth, are mentioned in his account of the Tomb (*Travels*, 18):

> *... In the place where the Lord's body was laid, at the head, has been placed a bronze lamp. It burns there day and night, and we took a blessing from it, and then put it back. Earth is brought to the Tomb and put inside, and those who go in take some as a blessing.*

Moments later he finds himself in the nearby Basilica of Constantine, where he describes an impressive ceremony for the blessing of oil flasks (*Travels*, 20):

> *In the courtyard of the basilica* [at Golgotha] *is a small room where they keep the Wood of the Cross. We venerated it with a kiss .... At the moment when the Cross is brought out of the small room for veneration ... a star appears in the sky, and comes over the place where they lay the Cross. It stays overhead whilst they are venerating the Cross, and they offer oil to be blessed in little flasks. When the mouth of one of the little flasks touches the Wood of the Cross, the oil instantly bubbles over, and unless it is closed very quickly it all spills out.*

Surprisingly, the pilgrim from Piacenza rarely gives any hint as to why he wants a "blessing" or, in the case of those with substance, what he intends to do with them. One gets the impression from reading his diary that each successive eulogia marked a finite increment in his total Christian goodness, and that this was reason enough for his seeking them. Others, however, are much more explicit, and leave no doubt that these little objects were more than simple mementos. Cyril of Skythopolis (fl. 555), for example, writes that St. Saba (among others) used oil of the True Cross to exorcise evil spirits (*Vit*. Saba, 26), while a century earlier Theodoret describes a man who attaches to the head of his bed (*Hist. rel.*, 21):

> *... a vial of oil ... which conserves the eulogia received from many martyrs, and which protects him from the nocturnal visits of demons.*

A comparable effect is attributed by Augustine to earth from Jerusalem (City of God, 22.8):

> *This man [ex-Tribune Hesperius] had also received from a friend some holy earth brought from Jerusalem ... and this he had hung in his bedroom in case he, too, should suffer some harm from the demons.*

For many, the eulogia was explicitly medicinal, both in its ultimate aim and its immediate use. A Coptic text describes the following practice at the shrine of St. Menas, southwest of Alexandria (Kötting, 1950, 1.98; see fig. 2):

> *The pilgrim suspended a lamp before the grave [of St. Menas] .... It burned day and night, and was filled with fragrant oil. And when anyone took oil of this lamp ... and rubbed a sick person with it, the sick person was healed of the evil of which he suffered.*

For others, the "blessing" was valuable in a more generic way, for the amulet-like power it could convey to its owner (Theodoret, *Hist. rel.*, 21):

> *The hill upon which* [James the Ascetic] *stood had, according to general belief received so powerful a blessing that people come from all sides and carry away the* [pieces of] *earth in order to take them home as prophylactica.*

And indeed, such pilgrim amulets were frequently called upon (and consumed) during the perilous trip back home. For example, one of the miracles of Symeon Stylites the Younger

(†592) tells the story of a certain monk by the name of Dorotheos who made the mistake of setting out to sea during the winter months. Encountering a storm (*Anc. Life*, 235):

> *... The monk took the dust of the saintly servant of God that he carried with him as a eulogia, and after having put it in to water, he threw it on the sea and sprinkled all the boat, saying: "Holy servant of God, Symeon, direct us and save us." With these words, all those on board were impregnated with perfume, the water of the sea surrounded the boat like a wall, and the waves were powerless against it.*

* * *

The Early Byzantine pilgrim souvenir was the eulogia or "blessing"; it was not a memento to evoke pleasant memories, as is a modern tourist trinket, but rather a piece of portable, palpable sanctity which possessed and could convey spiritual power to its owner. But of course, the pilgrim eulogia could fully perform its function without the aid of art, and,



Fig. 6
(ca. 1:1)

to judge from Early Byzantine pilgrim texts, embellishment (whether images or words) seems only rarely to have been brought into play. Sometimes, however, it does appear, either in the form of decorated containers for “blessed” objects or fluid substances, or in the form of stamps which were directly impressed on such appropriate eulogiai as earth or wax. In both cases, imagery tended to be directly related to the eulogia’s sanctifying origins or to the practical circumstances of its use.

Perhaps the clearest representatives of the latter category of decoration are those “blessings” whose pictures responded directly to the perils of the pilgrimage itself, and specifically to sea travel. St. Phocas and St. Isidore were both patrons of seafarers; among the early cult centers of the former was Chersonesus on the Black Sea, and of the latter, the island of Chios (see fig. 2). Preserved in the Hermitage Museum is a large clay pilgrim token of St. Phocas which bears an inscription reading “Blessing of St. Phocas of the Poor House of Chersonesus” (fig. 6; Latyšev, 1899, 344 ff.). At the center of the token stands the saint with his arms raised in prayerful intercession on behalf of the pilgrim; toward the right background is a standing censer (cf. fig. 7; Herbert, 1972, no. 32), while beneath Phocas’ feet is a miniature ship with oars and rudder.



Fig. 7 (H. 28.3 cm.)



Fig. 10 (H. 19 cm.)

The lost stamp which produced the Phocas token must have been much like the surviving bronze stamp in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, which was very likely used to make amuletic pilgrim tokens for seafaring visitors to Chios (fig. 8). The inscription has been incised backwards in order that it be readable in impression. At the upper right of the stamp is the abbreviation for “Jesus Christ”; at the upper left, the words “St. Isidore” occur; and in the exergue below, “Receive the Blessing.” Toward the right background is a tiny “shrine” with a hanging lamp and a standing censer, while to the left, as though suspended from the saint’s hand, is a miniature ship.



Fig. 8 (1:1)

“Blessed” water seems also to have been useful to travelers by sea. The pilgrim from Piacenza kept the Feast of the Epiphany at the Jordan River, where he saw and described the following (*Travels*, 11):

> *... At dawn ... the priest goes down to the river. The moment he starts blessing the water, the Jordan turns back on itself with a roar and the water stays still till the baptism is finished. All the ship-owners of Alexandria have men there that day with great jars of spices and balsam, and as soon as the river has been blessed, before the baptism starts, they pour them out in to the water, and draw out holy water. This water they use for sprinkling their ships when they are about to set sail.*

To judge from its impressive architectural remains, including cisterns, and the wealth of surviving pilgrim flasks that issued from it, the complex of St. Menas southwest of Alexandria must have been the most popular water shrine in the Early Byzantine period (see fig. 2). Most surviving Menas flasks show the saint as an orant intercessor flanked by a pair of camels (cf. Metzger, 1981, 9 ff.), although an unusually splendid example in the Louvre has elements of the Phocas token and the Isidore stamp (fig. 9; Metzger, 1981, no. 97). Circled by an inscription reading "Blessing of St. Menas, Amen," an orant saint stands flanked on the left by a miniature shrine with hanging lamp, and on the right by an oversized censer (cf. fig. 10; Wulff, 1909, no. 977). Unlike Phocas and Isidore, Menas was not specifically associated with seafarers.



Fig. 9 (1:3)

However, a significant pro-portion of his visitors must have come via the port of Alexandria, and their special anxieties were acknowledged by the fact that some of his flasks also bear relief images of sailing ships (fig. 11; cf. Kaufmann, 1910, pl. 96.12).

* * *

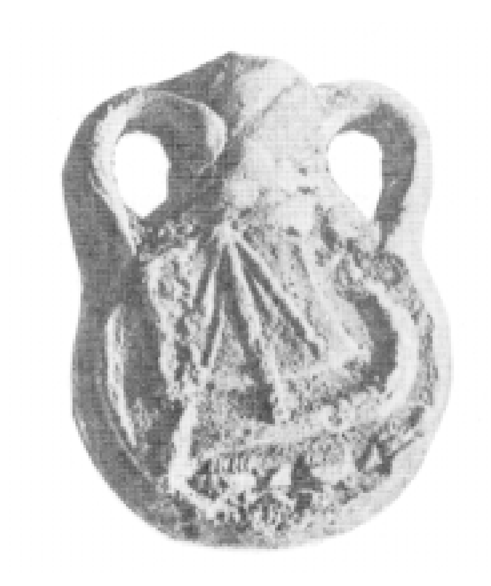


Fig. 11 (reduced)

The patron as intercessor (i.e., orant) and the desired effect (e.g. the protected ship) were two characteristic themes in Early Byzantine eulogia decoration, both of which responded primarily to the pilgrim's use of the "blessed" substance. Somewhat different are those words and images which were added to evoke the pedigree of the eulogia-that is, the circumstances through which the substance acquired its "blessing." Heading this category is the ubiquitous inscriptional formula "Blessing of [this or that saint]" (figs. 6, 9, 12, 22, 24, 29, 30). Of course, this same message could be—and often was—conveyed with an image. A clay pilgrim token in Bobbio, for example, combines both modes (fig. 12; Grabar, 1958,



Fig. 12 (ca. 1:1)

44): Around its circumference is the inscription "Blessing of the Lord from the Refuge of St. Elizabeth," while at its center is a dramatic portrayal of the event which conferred the "blessing." According to the *Protoevangelium of James* (22.3), a cave miraculously opened to hide St. Elizabeth and her child, the infant John the Baptist, during the Massacre of the Innocents. Mother and baby are here shown fleeing toward a rocky form at the right, while pursuing them at the left is a Roman soldier with raised sword; above and between them is an angel of the Lord. This earthen token likely came from a rock cave at En Kerem which in Early Byzantine times seems to have been identified with the *Protoevangelium* legend (Wilkinson, 1977, 156; see fig. 2). Picture and inscription complement one another in documenting the sacred genealogy of some otherwise insignificant clay. At the same time, both the En Kerem holy site and this, its portable "blessing," must have been recognized and appreciated for their obvious evocation of protection and for their effective power to provide refuge against hostile forces.



Fig. 13a (23.7 x 18.0 cm.)

Among the reliquaries that entered the Museo Sacro of the Vatican from the Treasure of the Sancta Sanctorum is a small red box filled with bits of earth, wood, and cloth (figs. 13a, b; Morey, 1926, *passim*). These contents are “blessings” from the Holy Land, some of which still have legible labels (e.g. “from the Mt. of Olives,” “ from Sion”). The inside of the reliquary’s cover bears five scenes of events which took place in the Holy Land; in a hierarchy of ascending spiritualism (from the corporeal to the divine), they read from bottom

left to upper right and include the Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, Women at the Tomb, and the Ascension. Unlike the Elizabeth token, the relationship here of image to object is only generic; that is, there are eulogiai (e.g. that “from Sion”) which clearly lack pictures. Apparently the intent was to document in a general way the sacred origin of these “blessings” by showing the most important biblical events which had, in a literal sense, made the Holy Land (and this holy “land”) holy.



Fig. 13b

Yet not all of these scenes are iconographically accurate to the Bible text. For example, the Women at the Tomb (fig. 13b) shows instead of the rock-hewn cave of the Gospels a complex architectural ensemble modeled on the Tomb aedicula (figs. 14a, b; Wilkinson model) and the Anastasis Rotunda (fig. 15; after Wilkinson) as they existed at the time of the painting. Suspended above the figures is the dome of the Rotunda; its drum shows a. series of windows and its inner surface is covered with stars. Below, the small polygonal tomb conforms in a number of details to early pilgrim descriptions: it shows the ornamental columns admired by Eusebius (*life of Const.*, 3.34), the grillwork of Egeria’s account (*Travels*, 24.2, etc.), the pointed roof noted by the Piacenza pilgrim, the richly-veined marble revetment (lower left and right) described by Adomnan (*Holy Races*, 2.7), and, at the center, draped from an iron tie-rod over the entrance (described by the Piacenza pilgrim), a gold-embroidered hanging, decorated with a cross, of the sort that Egeria noted on special feast days (*Travels*, 25.7):

Just after seven in the morning, when the people have rested, they all assemble in the Great Church on Golgotha. And on this day in this church ... the decorations really are too marvelous for words. All you can see is gold and jewels and silk; the hangings are entirely silk with gold stripes, and the curtains the same.



Fig. 14a



Fig. 14b

To the Early Byzantine mind the Tomb of the Lord was not a building but a large relic; it was thus on equal, lofty footing with the True Cross. The pilgrim from Piacenza is explicit on this account when he records that he entered the Holy City and "venerated" the Tomb just as, a few minutes later, he was to venerate the Wood of the Cross. In emphasizing the real, historical structure of the Tomb at the expense of the biblical narrative, the painter of the Sancta Sanctorum reliquary lid was simply sharpening the focus of his documentation to show less the ultimate, biblical origin of sanctification and more the proximate, "relic" origin. This is fully consistent with the account of the Piacenza pilgrim which notes that "*earth is brought to the Tomb and put inside, and those who go in take some as a blessing.*" The owner of the Vatican reliquary may well have been among them, since one of the eulogiai in his box bears the label: "From the Life-Giving Anastasis."

Closely related to the Sancta Sanctorum box in time and place of origin (Palestine, ca. 600), in iconography, and in function is a series of more than three dozen tiny tin-lead ampullae, or vials,, most of which are preserved in Italy, at Monza and at Bobbio (Grabar, 1958, *passim*; and Engemann, 1973, 5 ff.). One of the finest specimens, however, is at

Dumbarton Oaks (front and back covers, shown 3: 1; Ross, 1962, no. 87). Its reverse (back cover) shows the Women at the Tomb in a manner basically similar to the Sancta Sanctorum lid (fig. 13b). Directly beneath the inscription is the windowed drum of the Rotunda, minus the hemispherical dome, but now with four of the tall columns which held it up. Beneath this "canopy" is a reduced version of the Tomb, which shows only its porch (cf. fig. 14b) which formed the Chapel of the Angel where, to judge from Egeria's account, the bishop

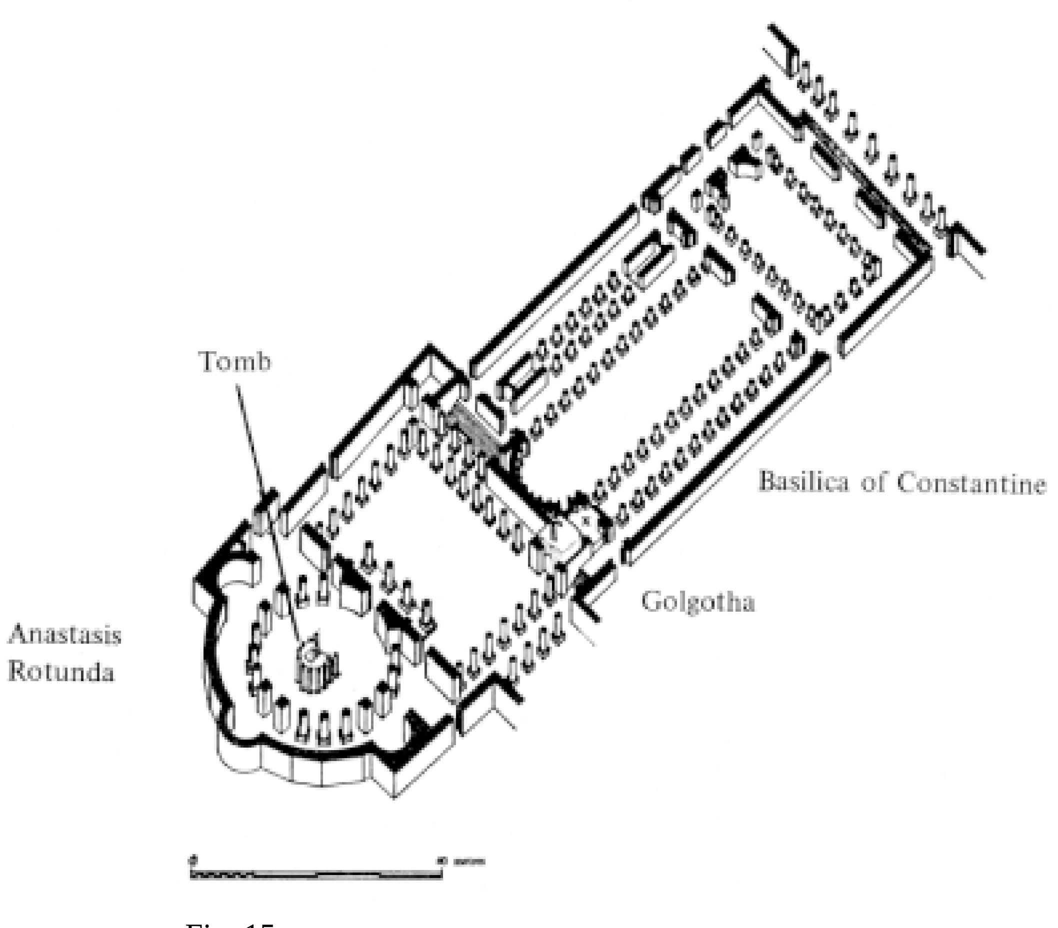


Fig. 15

stood as he read the Gospel text of Christ's resurrection (*Travels*, 24.9). Flanking the open entrance are Egeria's *cancelli* ("grills"), while above is a transverse tie-rod as described by the pilgrim from Piacenza. Within the gate are three recognizable forms: a crescent, which likely marks the low entrance to the tomb chamber proper (cf. Wilkinson, 1977, 123); an oil lamp on a stand, directly beneath the crescent; and, on the floor of the porch, the rhomboid shape of the Stone of the Angel, described by many pilgrims, including the one from Piacenza, who says (*Travels,* 18):

The stone which closed the Tomb is in front of the Tomb door, and is made from the same colored rock as the rock hewn from Golgotha.

Although the inscription above the scene reads “The Lord is Risen,” the iconography is heavily weighted toward the contemporary Tomb relic at the expense of the Bible text. One interesting detail is symptomatic of this bias: the Synoptic Gospels stipulate that the women approached the Tomb with spices to annoint the body of Christ, yet here the foremost is shown holding not a spice bottle or jar, but rather a swinging censer. This substitution (which is characteristic of many early versions of the scene) may well have come in response to early pietistic practice at the holy site itself, for Egeria related that the clergy carried censers into the Tomb each Sunday morning (*Travels*, 24.9):

After these three psalms and prayers they [the clergy] take censers into the cave of the Anastasis, so that the whole Anastasis basilica is filled with the smell. Then the bishop, standing inside the screen, takes the Gospel book and goes to the door, where he himself reads the account of the Lord’s resurrection.

The obverse of the Dumbarton Oaks ampulla (front cover) bears a longer, more revealing inscription than does the reverse: “Oil of the Wood [Tree] of Life of the Holy Places of Christ .” The “Wood of Life,” of course, is the True Cross, which immediately evokes the contemporary passage from the Piacenza pilgrim, quoted above (*Travels*, 20):

... The Cross is brought out of this small room for veneration ... and they offer oil to be blessed in little flasks. When the mouth of one of the little flasks touches the Wood of the Cross, the oil instantly bubbles over, and unless it is closed very quickly it all spills out.

Like the iconography of the reverse, that of the obverse responds more to the relic cult and to contemporary pilgrim piety than it does to the Gospel narrative. Indeed, this scene would more accurately be titled the Veneration of the True Cross than the Crucifixion, as it usually is, and in this respect it supplies a perfect pictorial complement to the inscription which encloses it. At the center is an equal-armed cross supported by a shaft which rises above the three-lobed hillock of Golgotha. From that hillock issue the Four Rivers of Paradise, which specifically identify this cross as the Tree of Life planted in the Garden of Paradise; from these rivers as from the side of Christ flowed life for men and for angels. Above the cross, just at the edge of the double incised ring, is a tiny *tabula ansata* with the faintest hint of an inscription. Again, the words of the Piacenza pilgrim come to mind (*Travels*, 20):

In the courtyard of the basilica is a small room where they keep the Wood of the Cross. We venerated it with a kiss. The Title is also there which they placed over the Lord's head, on which they wrote This is the King of the Jews. This I have seen, and had it in my hand and kissed it.

Between title and cross (both relics) is a bust portrait of Christ. He is symbolically linked to the Tree of Life and at the same time is the very source, through contact, of its sanctifying, life-giving power-a power conveyed to the pilgrim through the "blessed" oil which this ampulla once contained.

*   *   *



Fig. 16 (1:1)

Flanking the bust are the sun and moon, and, further out, the two thieves; all standard accoutrements of historical Crucifixion scenes. The two kneeling figures, however, are not. They are suppliants, approaching the cross as a relic, reaching forward to touch it in a

characteristic gesture of veneration. Yet more than that, they are pilgrims—they are the "strangers" (xenoi) from distant lands for whom the hostels were obliged to care. This is clear from the fact that they are portrayed with bushy beards and flowing hair, and in foreign, exotic clothing (i.e., in trousers). It is no coincidence that in pose and appearance they look much like the Magi who, appearing on other metal ampullae (fig. 16; Grabar, 1958, Monza 1) come as suppliants from the Orient to venerate the Christ Child.

The pilgrim's role in the iconography of Early Byzantine pilgrimage art is clear in scenes of veneration, whether explicit (front cover) or disguised (fig. 16), and in scenes or motifs which evoke the good (e.g., safe passage by sea) he might hope to obtain from his eulogia (figs. 6, 8, 11, 12). Like other "blessings," these with oil sanctified by the True Cross were carried home as amulets, probably worn around the neck (cf. fig. 17 [inside back cover]; Michalowski, 1.967, pl. 46). One of the group (Grabar, 1958; Bobbio 1) bears the inscription "Oil of the Wood of Life, that Guides us by Land and Sea," while others (fig. 18; Grabar, 1958; Bobbio 11) show the episode of Christ walking on water to save a drowning St. Peter-a theme with obvious links to the seafarers' eulogiai from Phocas, Isidore, and Menas, which have already been discussed (figs. 6, 8, 11).



Fig. 18 (1:1)

It is probably in the context of the pilgrim's vicarious participation in biblical events that one ought to interpret the two ampullae of the Monza-Bobbio group which show the episode of Doubting Thomas (fig. 19; Grabar, 1958, Monza 9). For most pilgrims, contact with holy objects or places was less a matter of establishing a new faith than of evoking and affirming an already established faith. For some, however, seeing was believing. In the words of Cyril of Jerusalem (Cat., 13.38):

Do not deny the Crucified. The house of Caiaphas will convince you, which by its present desolation manifests the power of Him who once was judged in it.



Fig. 19
(ca. 1:1)

That the Doubting Thomas ampullae were created to evoke a popular holy site or revered relic seems unlikely, since none of the early pilgrim texts makes more than passing reference to the fact that the event was thought to have taken place at Holy Sion (cf. Egeria, Travels, 40.2); moreover, the inscriptions on both flasks leave no doubt that they, like the others, contained sanctified oil from the Golgotha Cross. It seems more probable to suppose that the portrayal of this scene on this object was intended to remind the pilgrim of the Gospel account of Thomas' incredulity, and specifically of the fact that he was rebuked by Christ for his lapse of faith-a faith which was restored only after Thomas had seen and touched the wounds of Christ. Of course, seeing and touching were basic to the pilgrim's experience. The Piacenza pilgrim describes his encounter with a famous relic, the title, or placard, which had been nailed to the top of the cross (Travels, 20): "This I have seen, and had it in my hands and kissed it." Thus, like Peter on the water (fig. 18) and the Magi kneeling before Christ (fig. 16), Doubting Thomas provides an obvious biblical parallel for the pilgrim and his own experience. Significantly, the words on the flask, "My Lord and My God," are those which come from Thomas' lips at the moment when, like a pilgrim, he touches and believes.



Fig. 20a (1:1)



Fig. 20b (1:1)

Pilgrimage and death were closely interrelated. Scores of pilgrims sought burial in the precinct of shrines associated with resurrection, like the Grotto of the Seven Sleepers, near Ephesus (see fig. 2). Others took relics or eulogiai to the grave with them; Gregory of Nyssa, for example, stipulated that his pendant reliquary be entombed with him so that in death he might be accompanied by the martyrs (Kötting, 1950, 310). There were even those who took their burial garments on pilgrimage in order that, through contact, they might be "blessed." The pilgrim from Piacenza described the scene at the Jordan River on the Feast of the Epiphany (*Travels*, 11):

> *... At dawn, when matins is over, the ministers come outside, and, accompanied by deacons, the preist goes down to the river. The moment he starts blessing the water the Jordan turns back on itself with a roar and the water stays still till the baptism is finished.*
> *... After the baptism everyone goes down into the river to gain a blessing. Some wear linen, and some other materials which will serve them as their shrouds for burial.*

Quite a number of small clay pilgrim flasks, apparently from the sixth century, have come to light in the area of Ephesus, in western Asia Minor (Metzger, 1981, 17 ff.). They were likely intended for sanctified oil or water, but because of their diverse iconography and because only a few show inscriptions, the group as a whole has yet to be firmly associated

with a specific holy shrine. Among the more unusual and interesting types within the series is that which shows aediculae on the front and back, one enclosing a cross on a column and the other enclosing an open double door with a figure standing on its threshold (figs. 20a, b). Here again the interpretation is probably to be sought in the pilgrim's participation in the action although this time his concern is not with his journey through life but rather with his passage to death. The door had been a common metaphor in pre-Christian sepulchral art for the transition from life to death (or death to life). Christianized, it continued to be used on Early Byzantine grave stelae in Egypt (e.g. Crum, 1902, no. 8619); moreover, heavy basalt doors were themselves used as tomb markers in Syria and Palestine, and occasionally they show an aedicula much like that on the flasks (fig. 21; Hjort, n.d., *passim*). The triumphal cross on the other side is also a common sepulchral motif (e.g. Crum, 1902, no. 8420); together, cross, doors, and emerging figure evoke the power over death available to every Christian thanks to the victory of Christ on the Cross, here made visible on a pilgrim's "blessing" taken by him to the grave.



Fig. 21 (130 x 71 cm.)

*   *   *

Censers are conspicuous props in the iconography of many Early Byzantine pilgrim "blessings" (figs. 6-10, back cover). The key to their significance is to be found in a small, closely-interrelated group of clay tokens from the shrine of Symeon Stylites the Younger (fig. 22; Celi, 1923, figs. 18, 19). Around the circumference of each is the inscription "Blessing of St. Symeon of the Miraculous Mountain." "Of the Miraculous Mountain" is the epithet which distinguishes this column-dwelling Symeon of the sixth century (†592) from the fifth-century stylite of the same name ("the Elder," †459), upon whose life he modeled his own. Specifically, it identifies the hill southwest of Antioch upon which his column stood (see fig. 2) as literally being a source of miracles since (like the hill of the ascetic James) its earth had been "blessed" through contact with the saint.

The word “eulogia” (in the pilgrim sense) appears nearly a dozen times in the long, contemporary life of Symeon the Younger (Van den Ven, 1962/1970, *passim*), and in each instance it refers to a substance rather than to an action variety of “blessing.” One time it is water from the cistern near the column; another time, bread blessed by the saint; and in still another instance, a bit of hair from Symeon’s head. But most often, St. Symeon’s eulogia came in the form of reddish earth or “dust” from near the base of the column—it is the “eulogia of [his] dust” (*Anc. Life*, 163), or the “dust of his eulogia” (*Anc. Life*, 232). And this, of course, is the material of his tokens.



Fig. 22 (1:1)

Each of the half-dozen surviving tokens of this type shows the same basic composition. At the center is the saint’s column topped by his portrait, *en buste*; to the left a monk climbs a ladder toward the saint with a censer in his raised hands; below and to the left a second monk kneels in supplication, reaching forward to touch the column (i.e., the relic); while finally, above, the saint is being approached from left and right by a pair of flying angels bearing palm fronds (?) of victory.

Clearly these tokens share much in common in origin, function, and iconography with the Monza/Bobbio group of metal ampullae from Jerusalem; in fact, four of them seem to have made their way to Bobbio, in the early seventh century, in the company of twenty of those ampullae. Their design is especially close to that of the “Veneration of the True Cross,” discussed above (front cover). Three things, however, set flask and token apart: the pair of flying angels (to be discussed below), the man on the ladder, and the inscription in the right half of the field. The inscription reads: “Receive, [0 Saint,] the incense [offered] by Constantine.” Obviously, the significance of this short prayer hinges on the word “incense,” which in Early Byzantine Christianity had several variant meanings reflective of its several variant uses. In private piety one of its main uses was as a propitiatory sacrifice offered in conjunction with intense, personal prayer. To cite just one typical example close in time and place to St. Symeon: The church historian Evagrius tells the story of a certain holy man named Zosimas, who happened to be in Caesarea in 526 when a terrible earthquake struck Antioch (*Ecc. Hist.*, 4.7):

> *Zosimas, at the very moment of the overthrow of Antioch, suddenly became troubled, uttered lamentations and deep sighs, and then, shedding such a profusion of tears as to bedew the ground, called for a censer, and having fumed the whole place where they were standing, threw himself upon the ground, propitiating God with prayers and supplications.*

Both in a literal and in a symbolic sense, smoke and prayer were conjoined for Zosimas as they rose toward heaven; one an offering to intensify and facilitate the request conveyed in the other.

That incense shares the same meaning in the inscription on the token and in the story of Zosimas, and that both reflect a real and living aspect of contemporary piety are corroborated by a small but important group of inscribed bronze censers from Early Byzantine Sicily (fig. 23; Fallico, 1968, 70 ff.). Most show slight variations on the inscription "God, who received the incense of the Holy Prophet Zacharias, receive this [incense] ." The allusion, of course, is to the story of the father of John the Baptist, who, according to the first chapter of Luke, entered the Temple to burn incense before the altar. As he did, he prayed, and at that moment an angel of the Lord appeared before him with the words: "Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard...."



Fig. 23
(much reduced)

This evidence suggests that the censer had an important role to play in the pious ritual through which the effective power of the eulogia was invoked. It was the sacrifice which accompanied the suppliant's invocational prayer and which predisposed the intercessor (or deity) to act favorably on his behalf. The bond of intercessor, prayer, and incense is visually explicit on the Phocas and Menas eulogiai (figs. 6, 9); it is visually and textually explicit here. More-over, the same pietistic practice is implicit in a passage from a contemporary letter written by Gregory the Great to Leontius, an ex-consul who had sent him both eulogiai (oil) and incense (aloes) from the Holy Land (*Ep.*, 35):

> *For this also we greatly rejoice, that the gifts which you sent us were not unlike your character. For indeed we received oil of the holy cross, and wood of aloes; one to bless by the touch, the other to give a sweet smell when kindled. For it was becoming that a good man should send us things that might appease the wrath of God against us.*

By contrast to the Phocas and Menas eulogiai, which render the incense prayer in the most abstract, generic of terms, the Symeon token has a high degree of particularism: it shows someone actually offering incense to the saint, it depicts and names a suppliant, and it bears a suppliant's incense prayer. Two questions arise: (1) Is this Constantine, the man named in the prayer, to be identified literally or symbolically (or perhaps not at all) with one or the other of the mortals portrayed on the token? And (2), what is it specifically that Constantine hopes to obtain from St. Symeon?

Thanks to the extraordinarily long *Vita* of the saint, written by an eyewitness, we have quite a clear image of the activities on and around the column of Symeon Stylites the Younger. Significantly, there are eight references to the use of incense in the *Vita*, but in only one instance is it being offered directly to the saint at the top of his column in the manner suggested by the token, and in that case (*Anc. Life*, 222), the offering is expressly refused. Thus it seems unlikely that Constantine is to be literally identified with the man on the ladder. However, this lack of identity does not conversely require that the figure and his incense be only symbolic, since three of the remaining seven references to censing provide a vivid, thoroughly consistent image of how real suppliants used real censers, in the manner of Zosi-mas. Miracle 53 of the *Vita* relates the story of a youth from Daphne who is suddenly struck blind. Discovering this, his parents light lamps and throw on incense, imploring the help of Emmanuel in the name of St. Symeon. Miracle 70 describes an unnamed victim of an unspecified disease. He lights a lamp in his house and throws on incense, praying quietly and saying, "Christ, God of Your Servant Symeon of the Miraculous Mountain, have pity on me." And finally, Miracle 231 relates the story of a priest from the village of Basileia. His third son, near death with a fever, begs his father to take him to St. Symeon. His father replies: "St. Symeon, my son, has the power to come to visit you here, and you will be healed, and you will live." With these words of the priest, the young man cries out: "St. Symeon, have pity on me," and then tells his father to get up quickly, throw on incense, and pray, for the Servant of God, St. Symeon, is before him.



Fig. 24 (1:l)

In each instance the circumstances are basically the same: a devotee of St. Symeon falls ill while away from the shrine; instead of traveling to the saint, he induces the saint to come to him by burning incense, lighting lamps (cf. figs. 8, 9), and by offering a fervent prayer for healing. To judge from the iconography and inscription of our token, these must have been Constantine's circumstances as well. Corroboration comes from a nearly-identical Symeon token in Bobbio whose prayer deletes reference to a specific suppliant but instead makes a specific request (fig. 24; Celi, 1923, 429 ff.): "Receive, 0 Saint, the incense, and heal all."

It seems, then, that the imagery on these two Symeon “blessings” was neither strictly literal nor strictly symbolic. There was a real suppliant, he did offer incense to the saint, and he did pray for healing-but this all apparently took place *away* from the Miraculous Mountain, as part of a private healing ritual Thus here again the suppliant is a participant in the iconography of pilgrimage, but at one remove, since his identity is subsumed in the two anonymous counterparts who act out the spiritual and, in part, the physical reality of his piety. His supplicatory relationship to his intercessor, St. Symeon, is made visible in the figure kneeling beside the column, his incense offering is presented quite graphically, though in symbolic terms, above, and the prayer itself is spelled out at the right.

Suppliant, censer, and saint, entities which apparently never met in the experienced reality of the public shrine, here meet in a sort of private, liturgical reality on the face of a Symeon eulogia. Moreover, it seems clear that the very essence of that imagery, the clay itself, had an instrumental role to play in the rite which is portrayed on it. This is suggested by two striking facts which emerge from a careful reading of the *Vita*. First, in every instance but one, the “blessed” substance of Symeon is given to the pilgrim expressly in order that it act as an agent in effecting a cure. Thus, for example, “blessed dust” is rubbed on the body of a paralytic in order that he walk and “blessed dust” is drunk by a man with a bleeding ulcer in order that he might eat. The second striking fact is that in every instance, the Symeon eulogia effects its miracle away from the shrine: the blessed bit of Symeon’s hair works miracles in Georgia, the paralytic is healed in Antioch, the ulcerated stomach is put right in Constantinople. In other words, in each instance the saint’s eulogia acts as an intermediary agent to effect his miracle in a distant place; and almost invariably, it is a healing miracle accomplished through the agency of dust or earth.

*   *   *

That the iconography found on Early Byzantine pilgrim “blessings” is interpretable does not, of course, explain why it was put there in the first place. In fact, references to image-bearing eulogiai among Early Byzantine texts are quite rare (see, for example, Symeon the Younger, *Anc. Life*, 23 1; St. Martha, *Life*, 54; St. Artemius, *Mir*., 15; Sts. Cosmas and Damian, *Mir*., 13). Moreover, many liquid “blessings” traveled in undecorated glass bottles, several dozen of which are preserved alongside the sixteen scene-bearing metal ampullae at Monza.

Why, then, were pictures used? The reasons were probably varied, but one related phenomenon is certain: from the early days of Christian pilgrimage, images independent of blessed

substance were valued for their miraculous powers. Theodoret's account of the heterogeneous crowd of pilgrims at the shrine of Symeon the Elder (†459) ends with these words (*Hist. rel.*, 26.11):

> *Of* [pilgrimage from] *Italy it is unnecessary to speak, since they say that this man* [Symeon] *has become so famous in Rome, the greatest city, that they have set up small images of him in the vestibules of all the workshops for the warding off of danger and as a means of protection.*

About a century later the author of Symeon the Younger's Vita tells a comparable story about a woman from Cilicia who, after having visited the Miraculous Mountain, returned home, and then, "*driven by her faith, she put up an image of the saint in her house, and the image performed miracles*" (*Anc. Life*, 118).

There can be no doubt, then, that at least some pilgrimage art was thought to possess power independent of its substance, of whether it had received a "blessing," or even of whether it had been obtained at a shrine. Most pilgrimage art, however, was associated with sanctified substance and did come from a holy place. Pictures of sailing ships (fig. 11), which were created in response to specific pilgrim anxieties, were probably not thought to be imbued with their own iconic power. On the other hand, the Sancta Sanctorum reliquary lid (fig. 13a), with its pictures documenting holy pedigree, *looks* remarkably like an early "collective icon," and may well have served simultaneously as part of a eulogiai container and as a pocket-sized icon for private worship (Weitzmann, 1974, 45, fig. 33). Its image of the Holy Sepulchre (fig. 13b) would thus have been considered a source of the Tomb's life-giving power in much the same way as the "blessed" bits of dirt with which it traveled.

Equally "icon-like" are those pilgrim images in which one is confronted with a hieratic figure of the patron saint in the pose of orant-intercessor (figs. 6, 9). These objects seem to presuppose a direct and intense image-viewer relationship, and thereby suggest the possibility that they may themselves have had a role to play in the devotional act whereby the eulogia to which they are bound was exploited. This possibility gains strong corroboration from a vivid story of healing recorded in the *Vita* of Symeon the Younger. According to Miracle 23 1, a priest brings his second-born son to St. Symeon in order that he be cured of a terrible disease. Symeon blesses the young man, but then sends him home to await his miraculous healing. The father is sceptical and suggests that they stay near the saint a bit longer since "the presence at your side assures us a more complete cure." At this point Symeon becomes angry, scolds the priest for his lack of faith, then makes this im-portant statement:

The power of God ... is efficacious everywhere. Therefore, take this eulogia made of my dust, depart, and when you look at the imprint of our image, it is us that you will see.

Symeon is here offering the priest two quite different kinds of assurance that his son's cure will indeed eventually come to pass. One, of course, is the "blessed" dust, which assumedly the priest will recognize as the saint's typical, highly efficacious curative agent. The other, however, is the saint's image impressed on that dust; somehow the anxiety of the priest should be lessened by knowing that when he and his son get home and look at that impression, they will, in effect, be confronted by a vision of the saint himself. But how can this be reassuring?

The answer comes later in the same miracle, when the priest's third son falls ill. Naturally he asks to be taken to the Miraculous Mountain, but his father recalls the words of the saint and replies: "St. Symeon, my son, has the power to come and visit you here, and you will be healed and you will live." (At this point their image-bearing clump of blessed dust is probably brought out.) The young man gasps, falls into a stupor, and cries out: "St. Symeon, have pity on me." Then he turns to his father and says: "Get up quickly, throw on incense, and pray, for the Servant of God, St. Symeon, is before me...." Symeon appears to the boy in a vision and does battle with the demon that possesses him. Soon, of course, the demon is defeated and the son is returned to good health.

Other miracles, though in less detail, suggest the same scenario; namely, that a vision of the saint was instrumental to the miraculous cure. In Miracle 118, for example, a hemorrhaging woman from Cilicia invokes Symeon's aid with the words: "If only I see your image I will be saved," while Miracle 163 describes a healing accomplished in Antioch by means of blessed dust:

Instantly the paralytic was healed, after having invoked the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by the intermediary of his saintly servant Symeon, whom he saw with his own eyes under the aspect of a long-haired monk, who extended his hand and put him upright ....

It is clear that for these sick people, *seeing* was essential to healing—that is, to making real and effective Symeon's miraculous, healing presence at their side. The same was probably true for the Phocas devotee, the seafaring pilgrim whose ship was about to capsize on the Black Sea; the picture of the saint helped to invoke his presence, his eulogia accomplished his miracle. Miracle 231 of the Symeon *Vita* leaves no doubt that the image on the eulogia was itself instrumental to the "seeing" of the saint. In Symeon's own words: "When you regard the imprint of our image, it is us that you will see."

Symeon tokens like those illustrated in figures 22 and 24 are rare. They are, however, closely related to a larger, more diffuse group of clay eulogiai which, although not inscribed with the Miraculous Mountain epithet, nevertheless also appear to have been made for pilgrims to the shrine of Symeon Stylites the Younger (fig. 25; cf. Lafontaine-Dosogne, 1967, 140ff.). These tokens typically show the column, bust portrait, and angels (often with victory crowns instead of fronds) as well as the monk with the censer climbing the ladder. On the other hand, all apparently lack the kneeling suppliant and his inscribed prayer as well as the circular inscription beginning “Blessing of ...”

One typical specimen, figure 25, may be used to illustrate two categories of decoration often found on these tokens but not encountered among members of the kneeling-suppliant group (fig. 22). The first is initially quite difficult to detect; it is the Greek word hygieia, which means “health,” spelled backwards slightly above mid-level across the face of the token. That it is reversed (as are the hands of John the Baptist, in the scene below) simply results from the mechanical process whereby all such tokens were produced. Recall again Symeon’s words in Miracle 231: “When you regard the imprint of our image....” He uses the word “imprint” (in Greek, sphragis) intentionally, because he knows that the eulogia image has been made with a stamp. Thus, the letters of “health” (and the hands of the Baptist) are reversed in the impression simply because the die cutter failed to reverse them on the stamp.



Fig. 25
(1:1)

But what of the word itself? At first one might guess that it is there simply to evoke in the pilgrim’s mind the all-important state of renewed health which the possessor of the token would hope to achieve. But its original significance may well have been more profound. The word hygieia is found frequently among the minor arts of early Byzantium, and especially on objects of personal adornment, like rings and belts; it appears, for example, on the clasp of a gold marriage belt at Dumbarton Oaks which is roughly contemporary in date with the token (fig. 26; Ross, 1965, no. 38). Christ, acting as officiating priest, oversees the dextrarum iunctio, the joining of the right hands of the bridal couple. Surrounding the group is the inscription: “From God concord, grace, health.” These words are as essential to the meaning of the belt as is the image, since they serve to invoke from God a three-fold blessing on the marriage. By analogy, the word hygieia on the token serves to invoke from Symeon the blessing of health on the suppliant.

But it may have done even more than that. After all, the token differs fundamentally from the belt clasp insofar as its very substance is instrumental to the realization of the blessing. In this respect, it—or rather, the stamp that produced it—belongs to the same

tradition as a Late Antique doctor’s stamp published more than fifty years ago by Franz Joseph Dölger (fig. 27; Dölger, 1929, 47 ff.). Running clockwise around its circumference is the word hygieia, while at its center is a theta which, according to Dölger’s persuasive argument, stands for thanatos, or “death.” Between health and death, literally enclosing and trapping death, is the pentalpha, one of the most powerful amuletic signs in the Late Antique lexicon of magic. The pentalpha was the device of the legendary Solomonic seal;



Fig. 26 (1: 1; detail)



Fig. 27

it was engraved on the signet ring given by God to King Solomon in order that he might seal and thereby control the power of demons (McCown, 1922, l0*). On the stamp, *hygieia* and *pentalpha* together seal and control *thanatos*; more importantly, their impression conveyed that same magical. power to the doctor’s pill. The analogy here to our Symeon token, both in means. of manufacture and in medicinal use, seems inescapable, although for the “Symeon pill” the impressed word only serves to complement the healing power inherent in Symeon’s blessed earth and in his image.

Amuletic words or phrases represent the first category of decoration common to this larger group of Symeon tokens but not found on the smaller, kneeling-suppliant group. A second category is represented by the Baptism of Christ, which here occupies the lower right quadrant of the token’s surface. Christ appears frontally as a naked little boy; a much older, bearded John approaches from the right to lay a hand on His head while from above descends the Dove of the Holy Spirit carrying a tiny crown—a crown much like those being offered to Symeon above. There are, finally, two “extra” birds with no apparent function; one is above and behind John while the other (much damaged) is behind the monk climbing the ladder.

To understand why a scene from the life of Christ, and specifically the Baptism, should be placed next to the column of Symeon the Younger, one should first consider the special typological relationship that existed between this saint and his Lord. The text of the *Vita* leaves no doubt that Symeon's appearance and behavior on the column were expressly parallel to that of Christ on the Cross. When, at the age of seven, Symeon mounted his first column, the Lord appeared to him in a vision, telling him that his stasis or "station" atop the pillar was to be a mode of crucifixion in imitation of His own (*Anc. Life,* 16). This was Symeon's "position of combat" which in the words and images of his contemporaries became thoroughly assimilated to that of Christ.

Nowhere is this assimilation more explicit than in items from the pilgrimage trade. Consider,for example, the Dumbarton Oaks lead ampulla (front cover): it is contemporary in date and approximately equal in size to the kneeling-suppliant token in figure 22, and at least in theory could even have made its journey across Anatolia in the same pilgrim's pouch. Moreover, the inscription on the flask parallels that of the token not only in its appearance but also in its meaning. The same holds true for their respective images: the axis of each disk is dominated by the shaft of a palpable relic—column and cross—which is topped by a bust portrait of the holy figure whose contact sanctified that relic; Moreover, in each the relic is being venerated, and in each according to the same devotional protocol—the column is being worshipped by one kneeling suppliant and the cross by two. Compare, finally, their "chain of sanctifying contact": on the flask it passes from Christ to cross, from cross to oil, while on the token it passes from Symeon to column, and from column to earth.

The question might therefore reasonably be asked: if, through the eyes of the pilgrim, Symeon's *stasis* on the column was identifiable with that of Christ on the Cross, is there any comparable *topos* in Symeon's life or behavior which might be identified with Christ's Baptism? One recurrent theme in the *Vita* of Symeon the Younger is the belief that his power to perform miracles originated with God, and was merely transmitted through Symeon, "His Servant ." Moreover, on several occasions the vehicle for that transmission is explicitly identified as the Dove of the Holy Spirit. Miracle 28, for example, paints a vivid image of Symeon as a very young boy teaching an amazed crowd of elder churchmen from the top of his column. One of his listeners, who has apparently come from a great distance, turns to a local monk and asks if doves are indigenous to the region When he hears that they are not, he bears witness to having seen a miracle; for, moments earlier, he had seen a luminous dove enter and then leave the window of Symeon's protective hut at the top of the column.

This textual account of divine inspiration has a visual counterpart on an Early Byzantine stela from northern Syria, now in the Louvre (fig. 28; Lafontaine-Dosogne, 1967, 172; 190 ff.). Whether it is the elder or the younger Symeon who is portrayed is not clear;

the sense of the image, however, is unmistakable, and in a general way applies to both. We see, at the left, Symeon's column topped by its protective hut; lower down a snake, generically evocative of evil; while to the right is the familiar ladder with a crudely-proportioned monk bearing an oversized censer. The point of interest for us, however, is the bird flying toward the hut with a crown in its beak. This bird and its relationship to Symeon form an obvious parallel, both morphologically and conceptually, to the bird descending toward Christ in the Baptism (fig. 25); this alone would be sufficient to establish their typological bond. The relationship is, however, even more explicitly underlined on the token through the physical juxtaposing of Symeon and Christ, and through the fact that both are about to receive crowns from heaven. The difference, of course, is that in Symeon's case an angel and not a bird proffers the crown. But in order that the parallel with Christ and the Baptism not be missed, each of Symeon's angels is bound compositionally (and thereby, symbolically) with a bird—a bird whose presence on the token would otherwise be totally gratuitous.

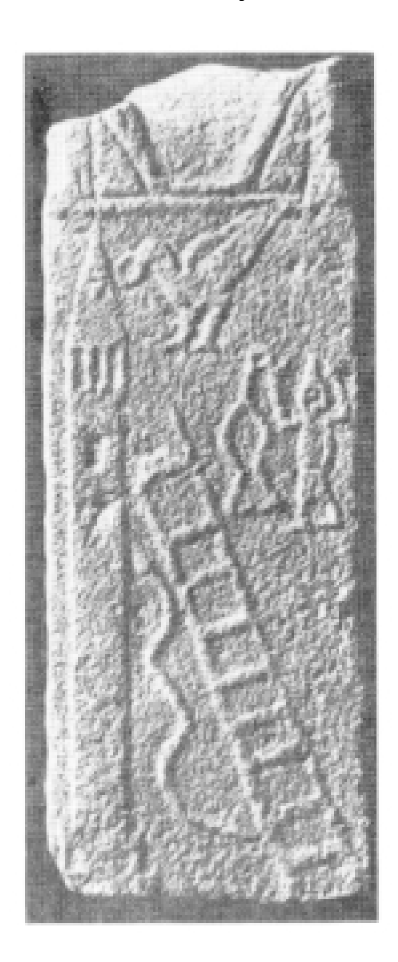


Fig. 28 (H. 65 cm.)

But why take such pains in so restricted a format to show that Symeon, like Christ, was Spirit? In fact there is a very good reason. Earlier visited by and infused with the Holy a passage from Miracle 118 of the *Vita* was quoted in which a sick woman was described as saying: "If only I see your image I will be saved." Just a few lines previous we are told exactly why Symeon's image could be counted on to possess such power: "This image performs miracles because the Holy Spirit which inhabits Symeon covers it with its shadow." In other words, the healing power of this object (present in both image and substance) exists because Symeon is a vehicle for the divine spirit. The iconography of the tokendoes nothing more than make this important truth visually explicit; that is, it demonstrates that the ascending chain of imparted sanctity. (and thus of healing power) did not and in fact could not end with Symeon at the top of the column. For the eulogia of his dust and image to be effective, there had to be a final connecting link between Symeon and God-a link made palpable in the form of the Dove of the Holy Spirit.

One surprising characteristic of both types of Symeon eulogiai (figs. 22, 25) is the frequency with which a palm print (from various hands) appears on the reverse of the token (figs. 29a, b). Clay sealings were common in Late Antique society, and whether encountered on a document, on merchandise, or the lock plate of a door or chest, they usually looked much like our Symeon tokens; moreover, like them, they conveyed the security and authority of the party whose device had been impressed into their surface. Unlike our pilgrim tokens, however, the reverses of legal, private, and commercial clay sealings characteristically bear traces not of a hand but of the packing or writing material (e.g. papyrus) to which they had been attached. Of course, one can postulate that the palm print



Fig. 29a (1:1)



Fig. 29b (1:1)

on our Symeon sealings was simply an unintentional by-product of the assembly-line process whereby tokens were produced; and in support of this one can cite a group of commercial clay sealings from the ancient Near East which were made by the counter-pressure of the thumb and two fingers at the moment of the application of the seal (McDowell, 1935, 23 1 ff.). The clarity of the print on the Symeon tokens and the surprising consistency with which the hand is either parallel or perpendicular to the shaft of the column suggests, however, a certain self-consciousness—a self-consciousness which may have been fostered by the piety and devotional practices of contemporary pilgrims. Recall again Miracle 23 1 of Symeon's *Vita*, the one passage which makes explicit reference to an image-bearing clay token. A priest brings his second-born son to Symeon to be cured of a terrible disease. Symeon blesses the young man but then sends him home to await the miraculous cure. A sceptical father responds: "Permit us, O Servant of God, to remain several days with you; your hand will touch us and will bless us." At this point Symeon becomes angry, scolds the priest for his lack of faith, and sends him on his way with the stamped eulogia. No sooner do father and son arrive home than Symeon appears, disguised, in a vision to the former. He puts a question to the priest: "What do you prefer: this eulogia that St. Symeon has sent you, or his right hand?" To which the priest replies: "Don't be angry, Lord, for great is the power of his eulogia, but I was seeking his right hand." At this point Symeon extends his right hand and gives the priest his eulogia, then, revealing his identity, scolds him for his lack of faith.

Our priest was probably no different from any other pilgrim; if free to choose he would naturally favor direct contact with the saint, and specifically, the imposition of Symeon's right hand. But this was not always possible. By necessity the ailing, house-bound pilgrim came to rely on a series of intermediary agents, each at one remove from the saint himself. The bust portrait impressed on the front of the token invoked Symeon's presence, the stamped inscription around its circumference invoked the blessing of his voice, and, perhaps, the impression of a hand on its reverse side invoked the saint's healing touch. Sacred impressions of hands and feet ranked high among Early Byzantine pilgrim attractions; moreover, they seem to have been used frequently as sources of miracle-working "blessings." Sulpicius Severus, writing in the early fifth century, described one famous set of footprints atop the Mount of Olives (*Sac. Hist.*, 2.33):

> *Moreover, it is an enduring proof of the soil of that place having been trodden by God, that the footprints are still to be seen; and although the faith of those who daily flock to that place leads them to vie with each other in seeking to carry away what had been trodden by the feet of the Lord, yet the sand of the place suffers no injury; and the earth still preserves the same appearance which it presented of old, as if it had been sealed by the foot prints impressed upon it.*

Equally renowned were the handprints in the column of the Flagellation, described around 570 by the Piacenza pilgrim (*Travels*, 22):

> *In this church* [Holy Sion] *is the column at which the Lord was scourged, and it has on it a miraculous mark. When he clasped it, his chest clove to the stone, and you can see the marks of both his hands, his fingers, and his palms. They are so clear that you can use them to take "measures" for any kind of disease, and people can wear them round their neck and be cured.*

In both accounts there is sanctifying impression—a clear and explicit bond between portable, palpable eulogia and bond which may well have been evoked in the mind of the pilgrim as he turned a Symeon token over in his hands.

* * *

The life cycle of the image-bearing pilgrim token (figs. 6, 1.2, 22, 24, 25, 29) seems to have been relatively brief; its roots lay in the fifth century, its maturation and proliferation came in the sixth, and its effective demise came with the loss of Palestine, Syria,

and Egypt to the Arabs in the seventh century. However, with Byzantium's reoccupation of the region of Antioch in the later tenth century, the Miraculous Mountain and its pilgrim trade were revitalized (Van den Ven, 1962, 214* ff.). Pilgrim token designs popularized before the Arab Conquest were then consciously revived (fig. 30; cf. Verdier, 1980, *passim*); over the centuries, however, their original sense had been lost. True, inscriptions are basically the same (here, "Blessing of St. Symeon of the Miraculous [Mountain], Amen"), as is overall design, with column, bust, angels, and attendants. These Middle Byzantine Symeon "tokens" are not, however, true eulogiai; they are instead cast metal pendants (the suspension loop is gone on this example) which in their very substance, usually lead, are incapable of conveying the traditional earthen "blessing" of the Miraculous Mountain. Moreover, neither suppliant nor censer is retained, which effectively eliminates the pilgrim and his incense prayer from the iconography. Their places are taken by Symeon's disciple Konon (left) and his mother Martha (right), who turn toward the column in poses not of veneration but of intercession, as though members of a Deësis, Here Konon and Martha seem to be speaking on the pilgrim's behalf to St. Symeon, whereas on the early tokens Symeon is himself the intercessor, speaking on our behalf to Christ. The angels, finally, have been altered in a most telling way. By the well-established canons Late Antique victory iconography they ought to be carrying either palm fronds (fig. 22) crowns (fig. 25); here, however, each carries a small cross, as if about to hand it to the saint. The overall design of the original has been perpetuated, but in the process its iconographic sense—the very essence of the eulogia—has been lost.



Fig. 30 (1:1)

* * *

What these Middle Byzantine lead medallions did have to offer the pilgrim was the inherent power of their image, the same power which Theodoret ascribed to the Symeon pictures in Rome more than five hundred years earlier. Moreover, it was this belief in images which made it inevitable that pilgrimage iconography, popularized and disseminated through the idiom of the eulogia, should eventually come to enjoy its own existence and evolution independent of "blessed" substance. This development is clear in the many surviving Early Byzantine amulets which obviously derived their iconography (and thereby their prophylactic power) from scenes and cycles developed for pilgrim eulogia. One such example is a pendant amulet made of leather in the Cabinet des Médailles (fig. 3 1; cf. Schlumberger, 1893, no. 1) which in its decoration is remarkably like a Palestinian ampulla (cf. fig. 32;

Grabar, 1958, Monza 13). Above is the Crucifixion with two suppliants (inscribed "Emmanuel"), while below is the scene of the Women at the Tomb (inscribed "Mary and Martha," and "the Angel of the Lord"). Crossing the medallion between the scenes is the suppliant's prayer: "Cross, help Abamoun." It is significant that the amulet matches the ampulla not only in its iconography, but also in its reliance on the prophylactic power of the cross—even though, of course, the amulet lacks the ampulla's "blessed" oil.



Fig. 31 (1:l)



Fig. 32 (ca. 1:1)

Another type of amulet with obvious roots in the Early Byzantine pilgrim trade is represented in figure 33 (Maspero, 1908, 246 ff.). It is a silver armband (here schematically flattened), one of the finest of a large group of such objects in silver and bronze produced in the sixth to seventh century somewhere in the eastern Mediterranean. Six of the eight medallions on this example reproduce episodes from a quasi-canonical cycle of Christological scenes which had been developed in Palestinian pilgrimage art. They include, from left to right, the Ascension, the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Baptism, the Crucifixion, and the Women at the Tomb. These images were frequently coupled with eulogiai of earth (fig. 13a) and oil (fig. 34; Grabar, 1958, Monza 2), and in a general sense evoked the "Holy Land" through the important biblical events that had, quite literally, made that land holy. Here they find themselves on equal footing with popular amuletic phrases,

signs, and images. Thus, between the medallions runs Psalm 91 .l, “He that dwelleth in the Protection of the Most High [shall remain] in the shelter of the God of Heaven”; medallion four has a Medusa-headed serpent, magical signs, and the *pentalpha*, as well as the apotropaic acclamation “One God conquering [Evil]”; while in medallion eight there is a Holy Rider and a second *pentalpha*.

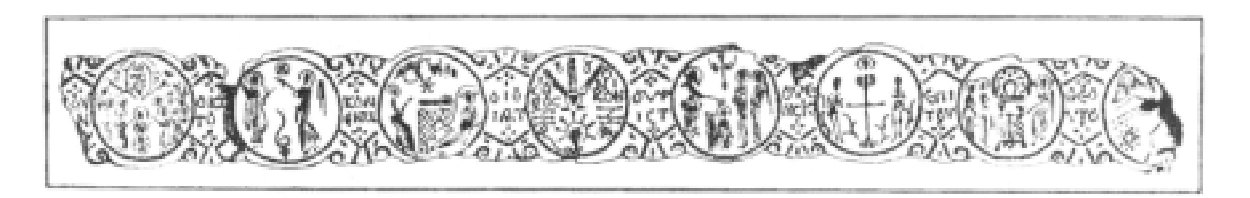


Fig. 33 (ca. 10 cm.)



Fig. 34 (ca. 1:1)

The art of the pilgrim—if the word “art” is even applicable—was for the most part remarkably plebeian in medium and workmanship. This lack of elegance was in part an inevitable consequence of its mass distribution, and in part a necessary result of the fact that by

their very nature eulogiai were bound to lowly substance. Once freed of that substance, however, pilgrimage art could respond to the wealth and taste of the individual client. Consider, for example, the gold and niello marriage ring with octagonal hoop at Dumbarton Oaks, one of four such rings to have survived from the seventh century (figs. 35a-c; Ross, 1965, no. 69). Its bezel shows a traditional marriage composition in which Christ and the Virgin place wedding crowns on the bridal couple, identified by inscriptions as Peter and Theodote. The remaining seven facets of the hoop, however, have been devoted to the Holy





Figs. 35a-c (1.5: 1)



Land cycle (cf. figs. 13a, 33, 34), with the representations of the Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, Crucifixion, and Christ Appearing to the Two Marys. Here again the pilgrim cycle seems to have been exploited more for its amuletic than for its mnemonic or decorative value, a point made explicit by the very shape of the object, an octagon. The protective power of this form is documented by Alexander of Tralles, a sixth-century physician, who recommends the wearing of an eight-sided ring as a remedy for colic (*De medicam*, 10.1; Schlumberger, 1892, 87).

*   *   *

The Early Byzantine pilgrim not only took something away with him, he often left something behind to commemorate his visit. It might have been as precious as a silver altar utensil or as simple as an inscription hastily scratched into an available surface. Whatever its form, it served as a record of the pilgrim's presence, a perpetuation of his prayer for intercession, and, in many cases, as a thank offering or *ex voto* for a blessing received or anticipated. Often the pilgrim's votive gift was a valued possession which he had brought on the journey. For instance, the Thekla shrine at Seleucia was apparently so richly endowed with exotic votive animals that a zoo was organized there for the entertainment of the pilgrims' children (Kötting, 1950, 156). As a result of numerous precious deposits, the Holy Sepulchre came to be laden with the jewelry of pious visitors so that, as the Piacenza pilgrim tells us (*Travels*, 18), there were:

> *... ornaments in vast numbers, which* [hung] *from iron rods: armlets, bracelets, rings, tiaras, plaited girdles, belts, emperors' crowns of gold and precious stones, and the insignia of an empress.*

Similarly, pilgrim inscriptions of one kind or another abounded (and in many cases survive) at holy shrines. In some instances they simply recorded the names of pilgrims, or of friends or relatives of pilgrims who were unable to make the journey. For the pilgrim from Piacenza the latter was the case at Cana (*Travels*, 18):

> *We came to Cana, where the Lord attended the wedding, and we actually reclined on the couch. On it—undeserving though I am—I wrote the names of my parents ....*

More often, however, pilgrim graffiti took the more elaborate and efficatious form of an invocation, making permanent the suppliant's prayer for intercession. For example, one of the marble columns of the Church of St. John at Ephesus is incised with a large, handsome cross flanked by the words "Theologian, help Sissinios and his mother" (fig. 36). An incised bronze cross at Dumbarton Oaks probably functioned as a more elaborate, more elegant version of the same type (fig. 37; Ross, 1962, no. 67). Surrounding the cross is a mass of lead which once served to seat it into a wall or column, very likely in a shrine or chapel dedicated to St. Thekla. At the upper center is a bust-length portrait of Thekla in the orant pose of intercession, while across its surface is an invocation on behalf of four individuals, one of whom was named after the saint: "St. Thekla, help Symionios and Synesios and Mary and Thekla."

The pilgrim's journey, especially to a healing shrine, was often motivated by a specific need; it is safe to assume, therefore, that much of what was left behind, whether simple or sumptuous, was left in thanks for the satisfaction of that need—which typically took

the form of a miraculous cure. Curiously, however, references to healing on Early Byzantine votives are surprisingly rare. Sophronius (Mir., 69) describes a (now lost) votive plaque at the entrance to the healing shrine of Sts. Cyrus and John at Menuthis, in northern Egypt (see fig. 2):

> *I, John from Rome, have come here and have been healed by Sts. Cyrus and John of eight years of blindness, after I had suffered here unmoving.*

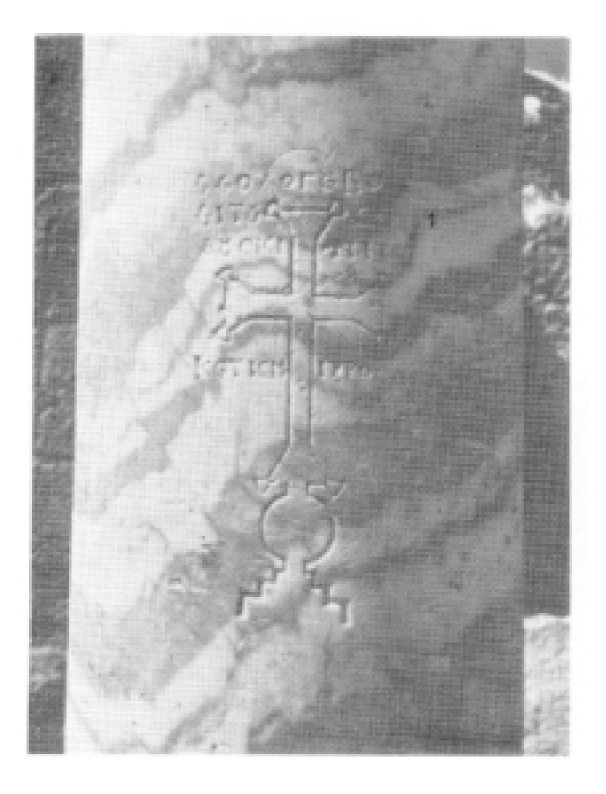


Fig. 36



Fig. 37 (1:1)

Thank offerings for similar healings, although anonymously conveyed, are preserved in a series of tiny silver votive plaques from northern Syria, now in the Walters Art Gallery (fig. 38). Some, like the specimen illustrated, bear the inscription "Lord, help, Amen," while others show the words "In fulfillment of a vow"; all, however, have a pair of large, staring eyes. Like their modern counterparts in the Orthodox churches of Greece and

ancient counterparts excavated at pagan healing shrines throughout the Mediterranean, these simple anonymous votives acknowledged a successful healing by showing the part of the body which was formerly diseased. To judge from the words of Theodoret (Graec. affec. cur., 8.64), the practice was not uncommon in early Byzantium:

> *Christians come to the martyrs to implore them to be their intercessors. That they obtained what they so earnestly prayed for is clearly proven by their votive gifts, which proclaim the healing. Some bring images of eyes, others feet, others hands, which sometimes are made of gold, sometimes of wood ....*

In a sense, it is with objects like these that the pilgrim's experience is completed. The journey has been made, the veneration piously accomplished, the prayers earnestly delivered, the eulogia received and employed, and the benefit—in this case the palpable benefit of healing—has been received and acknowledged.

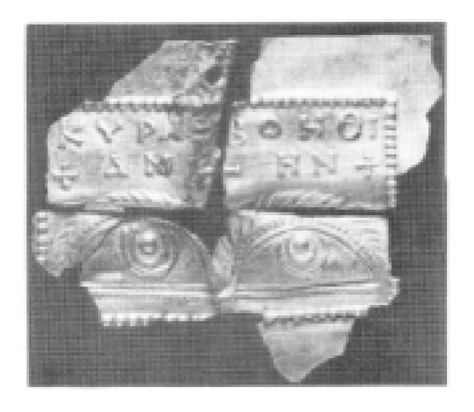


Fig. 38 (1:1)

Figures

Front and back covers. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, 48.18: Tin-lead ampulla with the Veneration of the Cross and the Women at the Tomb (Jerusalem, ca. 600)

1. Vatican Library, cod. gr. 394, fol. 14v: Miniature from an illustrated Heavenly Ladder by John Climacus; a monk setting out on his pilgrimage (Constantinople, late eleventh century).

2. Map with Early Byzantine pilgrim sites discussed in the booklet.

3. Map showing part of the route of the anonymous pilgrim from Piacenza (ca. 570). After Wilkinson, 1977, Map 25b.

4. Syria, Qal'at Sem'an: Ruins of the martyrium church of Symeon Stylites the Elder (last quarter of the fifth century).

5. Syria, Qal'at Sem'an: Tchalenko's reconstruction of the Symeon complex as it existed in the mid-sixth century. Af-ter Tchalenko, 1953, II, pl. LXXVIII, 4.

6. Leningrad, State Hermitage Museum: Clay pilgrim token of St. Phocas (Chersonesus, sixth century).

7. New York, The Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 41.684: Bronze censer (Egypt, sixth century).

8. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, 54.230: Bronze stamp for pilgrim tokens of St. Isidore (Chios, sixth century).

9. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des antiquités grecques et romaines, MNC 1926: Terracotta pilgrim flask with St. Menas (?) (St. Thekla on the other side) (Abu Mena, sixth-seventh century).

10. Bronze censer (Egypt, sixth-seventh century); from Wulff, 1909 (no. 977).

11. Terracotta pilgrim flask with sailing ship (Abu Mena, sixth-seventh century); from Kaufmann, 1910 (pl. 96.12).

12. Monza, Treasury of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist: Clay pilgrim token with the Flight of St. Elizabeth (Palestine, sixth-seventh century).

13a,b. Vatican City, Museo Sacro: Reliquary box formerly in the Sancta Sanctorum, filled with eulogiai from the Holy Land (Palestine, ca. 600).

14a,b. Jerusalem: Wilkinson's reconstruction model of the Holy Sepulchre as it existed before the Persian sack of 614. After Wilkinson, 1969, pl. X.

15. Jerusalem: Plan of the Golgotha complex as it existed in the Early Byzantine period. After Wilkinson, 1971, 45.

16. Monza, Treasury of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, no. 1: Tin-lead pilgrim ampulla with the Adoration of the Magi and the Annunciation to the Shepherds (Ascension on the other side) (Jerusalem, ca. 600).

17. Khartoum, National Museum: Fresco of the anchorite Aaron (Faras Cathedral, tenth century).

18. Bobbio, Museo di S. Colombano, no. 11: Tin-lead pilgrim ampulla with Christ walking on water (other side lost) (Jerusalem, ca. 600).

19. Monza, Treasury of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, no. 9: Tin-lead pilgrim ampulla with Doubting Thomas (Crucifixion and Women at the Tomb on the other side) (Jerusalem, ca. 600).

20. Boston, Massachusetts, Clive Foss Collection: Terracotta flask with cross on column and figure emerging through open door (Western Asia Minor, sixth-seventh century).

21. Geneva, Musée Barbier Müller, door A: Basalt tomb door with evil eye, Chrismons, and open aedicula (Syria, fifth-sixth century).

22. Houston, Menil Foundation Collection, II, J3: Clay pilgrim token of Symeon Stylites the Younger (Miraculous Mountain, ca. 600).

23. Syracuse, Museo Archeologico: Bronze censer with inscribed incense prayer (Sicily, Early Byzantine).

24. Bobbio, Museo di S. Colombano: Clay pilgrim token of Symeon Stylites the Younger (Miraculous Mountain, ca. 600).

25. Houston, Menil Foundation Collection, 11,J I : Clay pilgrim token of Symeon Stylites the Younger (Miraculous Moun-tain, ca. 600).

26. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, 37.33: Clasp from gold marriage belt showing the *dextrarum iunctio* (Constantinople, ca. 600).

27. Basel, History Museum: Alabaster stamp with pentazpha, hygieia, and theta (East Mediterranean, Late Antique).

28. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des antiquités chrétiennes: Basalt stela with St. Symeon (Syria, sixth century).

29a,b. Houston, Menil Foundation Collection, II, J2: Clay pilgrim token of Symeon Stylites the Younger, with a palm print on its back side (Miraculous Mountain, ca. 600).

30. Houston, Menil Foundation Collection, II, J4: Lead pendant medallion with Symeon Stylites the Younger (cross on other side) (Miraculous Mountain, eleventh century).

31. Paris, Cabinet des Médailles: Leather pendant amulet with Crucifixion and Women at the Tomb (Egypt?, ca. 600).

32. Monza, Treasury of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, no. 13: Tin-lead pilgrim ampulla with the Crucifixion and the Women at the Tomb (Cross and Apostle portraits on other side) (Jerusalem, ca. 600).

33. Amuletic silver armband with Holy Land scenes (Egypt?, sixth-seventh century); from Maspero, 1908 (fig. 1).

34. Monza, Treasury of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, no. 2: Tin-lead pilgrim ampulla with seven scenes from the life of Christ (Adoration of the Magi and Shepherds on other side) (Jerusalem, ca. 600).

35a-c. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, 47.15: Gold and niello marriage ring with Holy Land scenes (Constantinople, seventh century).

36. Ephesus, Church of St. John: Marble column with graffito cross and inscription (seventh century).

37. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, 52.5: Bronze cross (with lead seating) with image and invocation of St. Thekla (Syria?, sixth-seventh century).

38. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, 57.1865.560: Silver votive plaque with eyes (Syria, sixth century).

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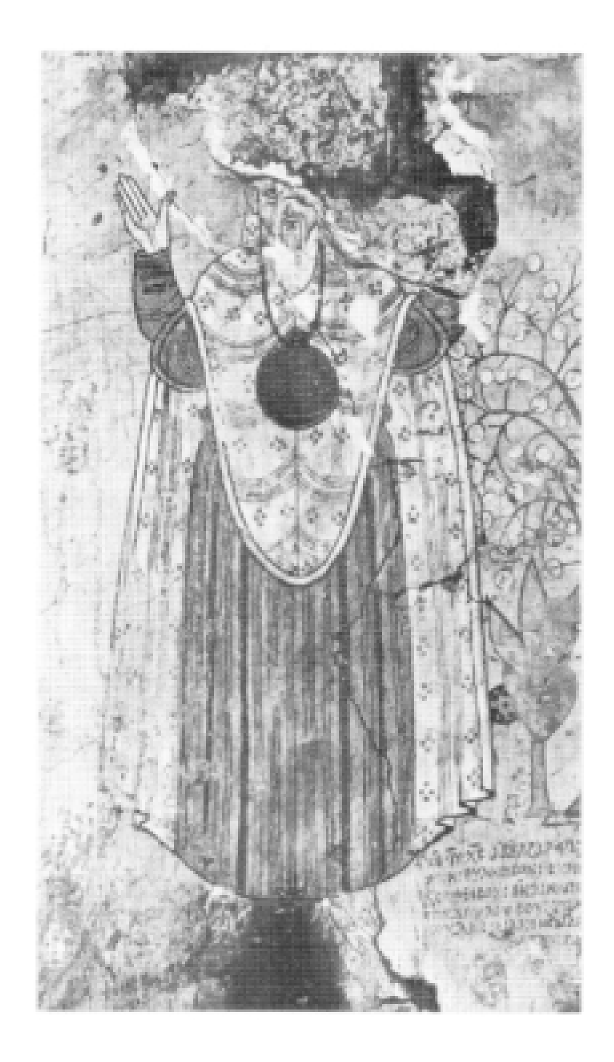


Fig. 17


ΑΝΕCΤΙΟ + ΚΥΡΙΟC